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THE ORGANIZATION OF THE TEN THOUSAND

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The history of the "Ten Thousand," as it is told in the *Anabasis*, is divided into four periods, marked by the death of Cyrus, the betrayal of the generals, the arrival at the sea, and the incorporation with the army of Thibron. During the first two periods their organization was purely military; but from the time of their entrance into the Carduchian mountains the social and political features were predominant. For they were "not an ordinary army, but rather a democracy of ten thousand citizens equipped as soldiers, serving no king, responsible to no state, a law unto themselves, electing their officers, and deciding all matters of importance in a sovereign popular assembly—as it were a great moving city."¹ Similiar observations have been made by all historians of Greece.

One of the most serious difficulties in securing an effective organization was race antagonism and jealousy. In one way or another race cleavage was constantly manifesting itself in this heterogeneous mass drawn from every part of the Greek world. Thus the Rhodians and Cretans were separately organized and armed with their national weapons. Thracians, Thessalians, and Mysians performed their national dances at a banquet given in honor of the Paphlagonian ambassadors (vi. 1. 5). Religious processions were performed *κατὰ ἔθνος* (v. 5. 5). The almost disastrous secession of the Arcadians who numbered 4,500 was due to race jealousy (vi. 2. 9). So too the desertion of 340 Thracians including the only cavalry force in the army was partly due to the lack of sympathy between them and the Greeks (ii. 2. 7). Diversity of dialect of which they were fully conscious appears to have been no barrier to easy communication.²

But their national Hellenic sentiment served to counteract in a large measure the disintegrating tendencies of racial jealousy. In

¹ Bury, *History of Greece*, p. 526.

² Cf. *Classical Journal*, IV, 360.

the presence of barbarians they were all Greeks. Cyrus appeals to their national pride when he compliments them on their political freedom (i. 7. 3). And Tissaphernes pretends to be desirous of winning the gratitude of Hellas by saving the Greek troops of Cyrus. Again and again Xenophon appealed to their pride of Hellenic race to keep them in hand. And his detailed references to the services of Athens in the Persian wars before an audience largely drawn from the Peloponnesus shows that Hellenic sentiment prevailed throughout the army (iii. 2. 11).

The whole body of officers, corresponding roughly to a senate, constituted the government. The executive power was intrusted to the generals. In case of dispute the majority ruled (vi. 1. 18). The rank and file met when summoned by the generals.¹ Large questions of general policy were decided by this body, guided by the recommendations of the generals. Such questions were the Persian peace proposals, the route to be taken in the retreat, the scheme to found a city. Committees and embassies were selected by the soldiers. In the general assembly anyone was free to make proposals touching the welfare of the community. As occasion demanded general regulations were enacted.

(1) When the whole army was engaged in plundering the proceeds were public property. (2) Everybody was required to assist the officers in enforcing discipline. (3) Communication with Persian officials was absolutely forbidden. (4) No one was permitted to leave the army until its safety was assured. (5) Proposals for dividing the army were forbidden under penalty of death. (6) Those found guilty of breach of treaty or violence toward friendly communities were liable to the death penalty. (7) Persons found guilty of instigating rioting or mob violence were liable to the death penalty.

Persons charged with infringing these rules or with wrongdoing of any kind could be brought before a court consisting of the captains (v. 7. 34). Before this court generals appeared to answer charges of malfeasance in office. Fines were imposed upon three.

¹ On one occasion (v. 7. 1 ff.) when the soldiers were greatly excited by the report that Xenophon intended to lead them to Phasis and were on the point of assembling of their own accord, Xenophon wisely decided to call them together. The moral effect of an unauthorized meeting would have been bad.

But trials might also be held before the whole body of soldiers. It would seem that Xenophon was tried before the general assembly (v. 8. 1.) for assault and battery. The proceedings were entirely informal. By a series of questions Xenophon showed that he was justified in striking the man whom, it appeared, he caught in the act of burying an invalid alive. The verdict of acquittal was unanimous. The death penalty would no doubt have been inflicted by the soldiers armed with stones or other missiles.

Fines were paid into a common fund recruited chiefly by the proceeds of plunder, and in the later stages of the march by presents from various communities. This money was used in a variety of ways. When a body of slingers was organized men were paid to make slings. Ships to carry the women and children, the sick and infirm, and the superfluous baggage were chartered by the army. Guides were rewarded by presents from the common store. The expense of public religious rites was defrayed by the army. On one occasion the proceeds from the sale of prisoners was distributed. One-tenth was reserved for religious purposes. In times of scarcity provisions were distributed. Only in this way could the necessities of the improvident or the wounded be relieved. No mention of the final disposition of the fund is made.

The care of the wounded and sick was recognized as a public duty. Early in the retreat eight men were appointed to care for the sick and wounded. The number seems very small. It may be that these were old campaigners who had acquired some skill in medicine and surgery. Their services were enlisted to aid the regular surgeons who no doubt accompanied the expedition.¹ At times a considerable number must have been required for the work of carrying the wounded and their arms and baggage. Men selected for such service were rewarded by exemption from other duties. That the hospital service was far from perfect is shown by the fate of the sick man whom Xenophon rescued from being buried alive. The treatment consisted of cutting and cauterizing (v. 8. 18) and the application of simple lotions, and the administering of drugs for fever and other ailments. Stops were often made in the interest of the sick and the wounded. When the

¹ iii. 4. 30. Cf. Cousin, *Kyros le Jeune en Asie mineure*, p. 177.

army was encamped in the neighborhood of a town, arrangements were made to have them received in private houses. Sometimes force was used to obtain this privilege. The patients paid for their food (v. 5. 20) On reaching the sea they were conveyed in chartered ships.

The data available for estimating the efficiency of the medical arrangements are very meager. Cousin¹ accounts for the larger number in active service at Heraclea than at Cerasus by supposing that the healthful sea air and better food had restored a large number to health. Between these two points they had stormed a native stronghold with considerable loss. The four hundred who were sold into slavery by the governor of Byzantium were for the most part convalescents (vii. 2. 6). Deaths were due chiefly to wounds and the severe weather. Very few died of disease (v. 3. 3). No specific cases of cures are recorded. Men recovered from severe frostbites with the loss of toes, and were able to re-enter the ranks for active service. But what became of those who suffered from broken bones? We should gladly exchange some of the pious writer's accounts of funerals for a few details about cures. He does indeed tell us incidentally that Cherisophus died, not from the effects of the fever, but from the medicine which he took. It is scarcely necessary to remark that Nicarchus the Arcadian who rode into the Greek camp severely wounded to announce the betrayal of the generals is not the Arcadian captain of the same name who deserted three or four days later. A wound which laid open the abdominal cavity could not have been healed in so short a time, if at all (ii. 5. 33; cf. iii. 3. 5).

There are indications that the soldiers were divided into messes. These are probably military divisions, but constituted self-governing units for certain purposes. Members of these groups were detailed by their companions to look after the transporting of baggage (v. 8. 6). In this way provision was doubtless made for the care of the wounded and the safety of the women who accompanied the expedition in large numbers.

Some have seen in Xenophon's proposal to found a city a desire on his part to realize some of the ideals of Socrates; but there is no

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

hint of this in the narrative. He professed to be desirous of acquiring territory and power for Greece.¹ It was an attractive proposition. A large body of hardy veterans who had learned how to govern themselves could easily found a flourishing community on the shores of the Euxine. On reaching the sea the Greeks were safe, so far as the Persians were concerned, and those who had the means were in a position to secure return to their homes. But they desired, nor merely to return to Greece, but to improve their financial position. The desertion of any considerable number would make it extremely difficult for the rest to secure even their safe return. The founding of a city would have checked the tendency to desert and would have kept the army together until the men had an opportunity to obtain a competence. Eventually those who desired it could return to Greece without endangering the safety of the rest. This may be inferred from Xenophon's statements to the soldiers when he found the majority was opposed to his project: "If you had continued as destitute and unprovided as you were just now, I should still have looked out for a resource in the capture of some city which would have enabled such of you as chose to return at once, while the rest stay behind to enrich themselves. But there is no longer any necessity since Herakleia and Sinope are sending transports, and Timasion promises pay to you from the next new moon. Nothing can be better: you will go safely to Greece, and will receive pay for going thither. I desist at once from my scheme, and call upon all who were favorable to it to desist also. Only let us keep together until we are on safe ground."²

It would appear then that the founding of a city was regarded by Xenophon as the only available means for securing the safety of the army and relieving the poverty of the large number who were practically penniless. At an earlier time, when the chances of a successful retreat seemed well-nigh desperate, Xenophon may have conceived the idea of establishing themselves in the heart of the Persian empire; but at this time his intention was to seize a native

¹ v. 6. 15. Silanus spread the report that Xenophon desired *ἐαυτῷ ὄνομα καὶ δύναμιν περιποιήσασθαι*.

² Grote, *History of Greece*, IX, 210.

city on the Euxine and reduce the neighboring population to subjection. Phasis had been suggested as a favorable place. But his enthusiastic description of Calpe (vi. 4. 1 ff.) as a suitable location for a city of ten thousand shows that he deemed it possible to find a favorable location unoccupied.

Curiously enough the idea of founding a city was first suggested by the anxiety of the Persians to have them withdraw from the rich agricultural district near Sittace, where they were encamped for a time. Rightly or wrongly Clearchus suspected that the Persians feared they would intrench themselves in this district, which was virtually an island, enslave the peasants, and offer a place of refuge for the king's enemies (ii. 4. 22). After the betrayal of the generals Xenophon in discussing the situation points to the Mysians and Lycaonians who had established themselves in the Persian empire, and suggests that if the Persians suspect them of a similar design they will grant them a safe-conduct from the country. But even at this time he hints at a permanent settlement when he warns them that if once they become acquainted with the pleasures of idleness and the charms of the handsome Persian and Median women they may, like the lotus-eaters, forget their homes (iii. 2. 23 ff.). It was not until they reached the Euxine that the idea was fully developed in Xenophon's mind; but being prematurely divulged it met with such serious opposition that Xenophon was obliged to drop it. The hostile attitude was due, he tells us, to the fact that these were not broken and masterless men, but respectable citizens with home ties who were anxious to return to their relatives (vi. 4. 8).

To the military basis of the organization were due certain undemocratic features, such as a court of captains to review the actions of the generals, and the virtual elections of generals by the officers of each division. But the democratic features were pronounced from the first and there was a noticeable growth of democratic spirit. Private soldiers were permitted and even encouraged to speak in the assemblies (iii. 2. 32; cf. v. 1. 2). Demagogues were not wanting who sought to make private gain out of their influence over the soldiers (v. 6. 19). Entirely democratic in the best sense is the readiness to listen to reason and argument rather

than to follow the impulses of passion or despair, or the dictates of self-interest. Grote has pointed out that Xenophon's success in rescuing the Greeks was in the main due to his ability to persuade. The decision to make every individual share in the responsibility for good discipline reflects the democratic principle according to which each citizen shared in the duties and responsibilities as well as the benefits of the body politic. In every matter it was fully recognized that the decision of the assembled soldiers was supreme.¹ Thus while new generals were elected by the surviving officers in each division the nominations were submitted to the army for confirmation.

The forces which kept the army together were different at different times. During the march to the sea the pressure of their enemies made cohesion and individual subordination absolutely essential to their safety. But when they reached the confines of Hellas, and safety was assured, this motive for cohesion disappeared, and disorders and outrages resulted. The situation was becoming serious when Xenophon had the courage to bring the matter to the attention of the assembled soldiers in a powerful arraignment of mob violence and individual license (v. 7. 13). This appeal to their political instincts and *sensus communis* was successful, for no serious acts of individual insubordination occurred afterward. During the last stages of the retreat the authority of the Spartan officers acted as a wholesome check. But even here Xenophon's influence and oratory were necessary to prevent them from carrying out the rash plan to seize and sack Byzantium (vii. 1. 25). On the whole we can readily agree with Bury that "it is a remarkable spectacle, this large body of soldiers managing their own affairs, deciding what they would do, determining where they would go, seldom failing to listen to the voice of reason in their assemblies, whether it was the voice of Xenophon or of another."

¹ Cf. Grote, *op. cit.*, IX, 215 ff.